

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

February 1, 2013 | Day 19 of the 105-day legislative session

The Legislative Update is a frequent report distributed throughout the legislative session. Each edition includes an update of legislative activities as well as a list of specific legislative meetings of interest to the Partnership and our partners. Copies of bills can be found on the Legislature's website at www.leg.wa.gov.

On Tuesday, Jan. 29, the House Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee held a public hearing on legislation that is very important to Puget Sound. [House Bill 1245](#), sponsored by Reps. Hansen and Smith, focuses on **preventing and removing derelict and abandoned vessels**. These hazards impede navigation and commerce on our waterways, threaten shellfish habitat, and impair water quality. Todd Hass, who facilitates the Partnership's oil spill work group, testified in support of this important legislation, which would sustain funding to pay for the removal of abandoned boats and require an inspection report to be presented at the time of sale about a vessel's condition.

At the hearing, the Partnership emphasized the urgency to align funding with the magnitude of the problem. There are more than 230 derelict vessels in Washington and a dedicated fund needs to be created to remove the older, larger ships that are more expensive to remove and dispose. Case and point: last week two large ships sunk in Tacoma's Hylebos Waterway, but the state has already ran out of money in the current budget for removing vessels of this size and magnitude. Removing derelict vessels from the surface of Puget Sound is cheaper than raising them from the bottom. Watch Todd's testimony on TVW at: http://www.tvw.org/index.php?option=com_tvwplayer&eventID=2013011161#start=3070&stop=32875

Also on Tuesday, the Partnership convened stakeholders to find a path forward for [House Bill 1052](#), which proposes to broaden the existing authority of **local governments to choose any approved sewage and solid waste handling systems**, including on-site sewage systems, as the main source of sewage treatment for any location. It is in the best interest of Puget Sound for modern, properly maintained onsite systems to be effectively utilized in places where sewers are not and will not be available. However, we have concerns that this bill more broadly promotes establishing on-site systems instead of sewer systems.

We met with the proponents of the bill—the Washington On-Site Sewage Association (WOSSA)—as well as state agencies and other stakeholder organizations. We reviewed the Washington Administrative Code (WAC), #365-196-320, and agreed that local governments and utilities already have significant flexibility to make a determination whether or not to allow on-site sewer systems. We committed to working with WOSSA to help educate local governments and utilities about the existing flexibility to help promote repairing or replacing septic systems when sewers are not available. The Department of Commerce and other organizations also made commitments to improve the WAC by adding language to address instances where homeowners do nothing because connecting to sewers is not affordable. The WAC language would define what is and is not cost-prohibitive.

2013 Session at a glance

Length: 105 days. If necessary, the Governor can call for a 30-day special session. Legislators can call themselves into special session with a two-thirds vote.

Next Cutoff: Friday, Feb. 22 is the last day to read bills in the house of origin, except for fiscal and transportation committees.

Information:

- For up-to-date legislative information, visit: www.leg.wa.gov
- To watch or listen to a legislative hearing, visit: www.tvw.org
- For both current and previous copies of the Legislative Update, visit: www.psp.wa.gov

Communication and Coordination:

If you are planning to testify on a bill, meet with legislators, or would like assistance with state legislative issues regarding Puget Sound priorities—please contact:

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On Wednesday, the House Environment Committee held a public hearing on two stormwater bills. The first was House Bill [1235](#), **which prioritizes state investments in stormwater control** by directing available funds first and foremost to local governments to meet the State's stormwater requirements. Dan Wrye, with Pierce County Water Programs, joined other county and city officials, and the Building Industry Association of Washington to testify in support. Proponents emphasized how current funding is insufficient to implement the permit, despite the ability to raise local revenue through stormwater management utility rates. The Department of Ecology and environmental community oppose the bill because it would refocus limited state funds to implement the permits, instead of maintaining the current flexibility to fund high-priority projects and important cleanup work like the Duwamish and stormwater retrofit projects.

The Partnership will continue working with our local government partners, state agencies, and environmental and business community members to find a long-term, sustainable funding solution. Polluted stormwater runoff is the largest water quality problem facing our state and there are no simple answers. Stormwater solutions are complex and require a combination of preventing pollutants at the source, improving how pollution is managed, and retrofitting existing infrastructure. The public hearing can be seen on TVW at: http://www.tvw.org/index.php?option=com_tvwliveplayer&eventID=2013011182

On Wednesday, the Senate Ways & Means Committee held another **overview of the Capital Budget**. Investing in Puget Sound protection and restoration is a priority in the budget proposed by Gov. Gregoire. You can learn more about the nuances of the Capital Budget by watching the work session on TWV, beginning at minute 53:35: http://www.tvw.org/index.php?option=com_tvwplayer&eventID=2013011191

On Thursday, the House Appropriations committee held a **work session on natural resource programs**. Listening to this work session provides an informative civic lesson about the basics of natural resource funding. The work session is available on TVW at: http://www.tvw.org/index.php?option=com_tvwplayer&eventID=2013011216

On Friday, the Partnership convened another weekly conference call for our board members to discuss legislative issues most important to protecting and restoring the health of Puget Sound. We reviewed the legislative committee schedule for next week and discussed the highest-ranked budget priorities we are emphasizing to fiscal committee members. Thank you to everyone who participated. We look forward to our next call on Friday, February 8.

Highlights for the week of Feb. 4-8:

- House Appropriations Committee briefing on the **Operating and Capital budget** interaction, Monday, Feb. 4, at 3:30 p.m.
- Senate Ways & Means Committee hearing on [Senate Bill 5445](#), regarding **funding capital projects**, on Monday, Feb. 4, at 3:30 p.m. This proposal focuses solely on education investments. Natural resource projects are not included in this proposal, but we expect to see one soon because Puget Sound restoration projects help strengthen the health of our economy and the ecosystem. A recent NOAA study determined that restoration projects generate more jobs than other types of capital projects. For every \$1 million invested, oil and gas projects create roughly five jobs, road infrastructure creates seven jobs, and watershed restoration creates 17 jobs. More labor-intensive restoration work can create as many as 33 jobs per \$1 million invested. Investing in the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration projects alone would create or retain 845 jobs. We continue emphasizing this point to legislators and are receiving strong support in the House.

- Senate Agriculture, Water & Rural Economic Development Committee hearing on [Senate Bill 5276](#), regarding the **use of designated agricultural lands**, Tuesday, Feb. 5, at 10 a.m.
- House Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs Committee executive session on [House Bill 1277](#), regarding **tribes holding conservation easements**, Tuesday, Feb. 5, at 10 a.m.
- House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee public hearing on [House Bill 1112](#), regarding **standards for the use of science to support public policy** and an executive session on [House Bill 1245](#), regarding **derelict and abandoned vessels** in state waters, on Tuesday, Feb. 5, at 10 a.m.
- House Judiciary Committee executive session on [House Bill 1194](#), **limiting liability for habitat projects**, on Tuesday, Feb. 5, at 10 a.m.
- Senate Energy, Environment & Telecommunications Committee possible executive session on [Senate Bill 5296](#), concerning the **Model Toxics Control Act**, [Senate Bill 5201](#), **accelerating cleanup of hazardous waste sites**. The committee will also hold a public hearing on [Senate Bill 5324](#), concerning **mosquito abatement in stormwater control retention ponds**, and [Senate Bill 5326](#), **delaying new stormwater requirements**, on Tuesday, Feb. 5, at 1:30 p.m.
- House Environment Committee public hearing on [House Bill 1294](#), **concerning flame retardants**, on Wednesday, Feb. 6, at 1:30 p.m.
- House Environment Committee public hearing on [House Bill 1444](#), concerning **stewardship of household mercury-containing lights**, possible executive session on bills previously heard in committee, on Thursday, Feb. 7, at 10 a.m.
- House Local Government Committee public hearing on [House Bill 1401](#), addressing the **timing of penalties under the growth management act**, on Thursday, Feb. 7, at 8 a.m.
- House Agriculture & Natural Resource Committee executive session on [House Bill 1188](#), **creating a focused effort on reestablishing a rural agricultural economy** in Western Washington by making investments aimed at returning under-producing land back into a state of active agricultural production, on Thursday, Feb. 7, at 1:30 p.m.

BILL	COMP.BILL	TITLE	STATUS	SPONSOR
KEY PUGET SOUND BILLS				
1052		Concerning local government selection of appropriate sewer systems in urban areas	HLocal Govt 2/1 1:30	ANGEL
1079		Relating to economic revitalization in urban growth areas	HComm Dev, Hou 1/23	APPLETON
1104		Relating to incentivizing up-front environmental planning and review	HLocal Govt 2/1 1:30	FITZGIBBON
1113		Concerning standards for the use of science to support public policy	HEnv 1/29 Majority; do pass. Passed to Rules for second reading 1/30	SHORT
1163		Relating to administrative procedures to promote accountability and economic relief	HGovt Operatio 1/17	TAYLOR
1194		Relating to limiting liability for habitat projects	HJudiciary 2/5 10 a.m.	STANFORD
1235	5441	Relating to prioritizing state investments in stormwater control	HEnvironment 1/30	PIKE
1237	5435	Relating to the creation of a stormwater compliance pilot project	HEnvironment 1/30	PIKE
1245		Relating to derelict and abandoned vessels in state waters	Hag & Nat Res 2/5 10 a.m.	HANSEN
1277		Concerning tribes holding conservation easements	HComm Deve, H 2/5 10 a.m.	SAWYER
1434		Regarding the inclusion of community involvement in environmental decision-making	Envir 1/28	POLLET
5024		Relating to transportation funding and appropriations	STransportation 1/14	KING
5057		Relating to outdoor recreation on lands purchased by a private, not-for-profit organization acquired in whole or part with public funds	SNatural Resou 1/22	ERICKSEN
5201		Relating to accelerating cleanup of hazardous waste sites	SEnergy, Envir 2/5 1:30	RANKER
5254		Protecting salmon and steelhead spawning beds	SNat Re & Parks 1/24	CHASE
5296		Relating to the Model Toxics Control Act	SEnergy, Envir 2/5 1:30	ERICKSEN
BUDGET BILLS				
1057	5034	Biennial budget bill	HApprops 1/14	HUNTER
1058	5033	Relating to fiscal matters	HApprops 1/14	HUNTER
1088	5036	Relating to state general obligation bonds and related accounts	HCap Budget 1/28	DUNSHEE
1089	5035	Relating to the capital budget	HCap Budget 1/28	DUNSHEE
5033	1058	Relating to fiscal matters	SWays & Means 1/15	HILL
5034	1057	Relating to fiscal matters	SWays & Means 1/15	HILL
5035	1089	Relating to the capital budget; making appropriations and authorizing expenditures for capital improvements	SWays & Means 1/15	HONEYFORD